872 has the photograph of Emperor Haile Selassie and the traditional Gospel of St. John in Geez. Priests now often teach the beginnings of basic arithmetic, in church schools.

783 In adult life, the church affects the layman less through participation in worship than through his individual confessor, the "näfs abbat", (lit. soul father). Each person is supposed to see him at least once a month, and he soon becomes a personal advisor, confidante, marriage counselor, etc. Therefore, even when a person changes residence, he often maintains this relationship to his "näfs abbat". If he were to take on a new one, the penalty assigned for sins (which the confessor keeps as a sort of fee) would be higher. His regular confessor, who knows his financial condition, asks little beyond the seasonal and festival gifts considered his due. In time of trouble, the regular confessor will appear as a character witness in court, or as "wäs" (guarantor) to help him obtain employment or to keep him out of jail pending trial.

585 Most laymen, are not married by eucharistic marriage in church (the "qurban"). There is no social or religious stigma to marrying outside the church; in fact the priest comes to the secular ceremony ("semanya") to bless the couple. But it does mean technical excommunication, and the couple cannot wear the "aklil" crown at church festivals and parades.

763 As a further result, such a couple cannot receive full last rites, though the confessor-priest will come

763 to hear confession and pray at the bedside. To become eligible for full last rites, elderly pious persons often take vows as monks or nuns.

764 If the deceased was a priest or monk, the arms are tied across the chest in the sign of the cross. For a lay person they are tied across the middle of the body. Eyes and mouth are closed. The corpse is tied in a mat. No permanent gravestones are set in the churchyard where most members of the congregation are buried (poor non-members are buried in the bush). In the case of a "great man", the grave is sometimes marked for some years, and the skull and bones later sent to a sacred monastery for storage under a cave-ledge. In a few years the place of burial is usually obliterated by the rains, unless rocks have been gradually piled on it as a memorial.

765

At the burial, the priest chants from the book "mäṣehafä genzät", the funeral book which begins with the "fetät", the prayer for absolution of sins. For a priest or monk, the parchment "lefafä ṣedeq" (Band-let of Righteousness) is spread over the body. It is an early Coptic Book of the Dead, containing spells and formulae that apparently originated in Egypt, dating partly to early periods.

766

The confessor-priest prays for the ascension of the soul, as the body is lowered into the grave. Neighbors express condolence to the kinfolk wishing that no further tribulations hit them. This is returned with the wish "May you have a burier in your old age, who will give "täzkar" for you". The confessor inherits

888 young, "not-yet-serious" young woman, partly because there is no
792 career involved, as there is in case of young men who become monks. Though there are usually fewer widows then widowers (due to the mortality in connection with childbirth), the lot of a widow is not a happy one. The proverb says:

[539] "Now that my fortune (husband) has died,
what will my mother-in-law give me?"

888 Without the kin group, an aging man, especially if sick, blind
735 or crippled, has little protection. The church is not eager to have
[792] him as a monk, for it can recruit younger men for its service, as a career, and an old man is much less useful in the churchyard than an old woman. He may, especially if landless, or in town, be reduced to beggary. There he sits at the approaches to the churches, repeating his demanding, ceaseless litany: "Selä Mädhane Aläm, selä Maryam, selä Giyorgis" (For sake of the Savior, of Mary, of St. George), stretching out an open hand. Sometimes he may send out a child to beg for him, either because he is too bashful, or is using it as a technique. Little boys will thus attach themselves to a potential donor, repeating "babba, babba" (babytalk for "daddy").
[608] They have already learned the concept of artificial kinship to establish human relationships.

6. The End of Life: Eulogy; Memorial Services and Feasts.

763 When an elder is close to death, other elders from among his nearest kin come with his confessor, and say to him: "Confess yourself". When he has done so, they ask him for his last will: "What do you give to your children, and for your soul (i.e. to the church, through the confessor, to the poor)". While fields and cattle are given to the descendants, (the former only in patrilineal descent), personal belongings such as cowhide mats, shamma

763 (tegas), horncups, etc, usually are given to the confessor, also some cash. In return, the confessor gives last rites, absolving the dying from sin, and, after death, assigns a burial place in the churchyard if the deceased was a member of the parish. A circumference of rocks is set around the grave, but no permanent gravestones, so that after a few years the growth of bush and the rains have obscured the spot. Exceptions are only in case of noblemen, "tallaqsäw", (great man) where markings are remembered long enough to permit digging up the bones if they wanted them sent to some holy monastery, such as Dabra Libanos. Non-members of the parish, especially if poor, are buried in the bush some distance from the residential area.

[763] The confessor stays with the dying, praying until the last moment. When death sets in, the eyes and lips are closed, the corpse is washed, the big toes and thumbs are tied, the arms folded in a cross, so that the hands cover the sexual parts. The body is wrapped in a shamma, and tied in a mat of palm branches or bread reeds, (called "<u>sälyen</u>"); tied on top of the head, across area of the eyes, neck, biceps, forearm, waist, thigh, below knee, and over the heel. The corpse is placed on the bed ("alga", carried to church, entering at the north gate as "salute" to the church, the mass is chanted, incense is burned in raising clouds, then the corpse is buried in a comparatively shallow grave which is covered with earth and then rocks. It is usually not marked with a name.

765 The moment death has set in, women run screaming out of the hut to announce their grief, wailing loudly and incessantly. In some areas they still scratch and cut themselves till blood flows, though the emperor's urging of restraint is reducing this. The

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

pleasure among the Amhara, but also as a typical response to situations which arouse anxiety. The crisis of death is met first of all by a prolonged ritual of wailing, and this is followed by a series of memorial feasts which occur on fixed days following the person's death. Any kind of bad news evokes repeated exclamations of "Ay! Ay!" When a child or wife is punished, the response is a prolonged and monotonous yell usually out of proportion to the actual pain felt. In the anxious hour before battle, war chants and boastful cries tune up the warriors' spirits. Moments of great awe, finally, such as the appearance of the holy ark when it is brought out of the church or the arrival of some great political personage, occasion a shrill ululation.

Response to illness was the anxiety area chosen as an index of positive fixation by Whiting and Child in their cross-cultural study of *Child Training and Personality*. They assumed that a fixation on oral gratification would express itself in a preference for therapies which involve swallowing something.[18] In this area, too, Amhara culture displays a preoccupation with orality, and not just in the form of swallowing. Something akin to a general principle for oral therapy appears in the well-known Amharic proverb: "For headache, shout on it! For stomach-ache, eat on it!"

A number of the oral therapies practiced by the Amhara are naturally functional, such as drinking a purgative made from leaves of the *kosso* tree to cure tapeworm, or eating a kind of unleavened corn bread to arrest dysentery. Beyond this, most of their magical therapies are also oral. Drinking holy water (and sometimes bathing in it) is believed to cure nearly every sort of affliction, from rheumatism and leprosy to eye and ear ailments. In some regions it is believed that eating the liver of a hyena will cure syphilis. Psychotherapy, too, often relies on oral remedies: the *zār* on a patient is often placated by feeding him, via the patient, a sumptuous meal. Oral types of prophylaxis are also to be noted. Garlic is eaten in order to prevent malaria. Certain kinds of animals are eaten on special occasions in order to ward off sickness. Finally, there is the remarkable phenomenon of the *lālibalā*, a night singer, who can protect himself against hereditary leprosy only by singing out loud in the night air.

In general, one can say that the Amhara have a tendency to attribute magical efficacy to oral incorporation and, to a lesser extent, to the adroit use of language. The latter belief appears in the assumption that human problems are solved by attaining some particularly fortunate verbal formulation, and in the association of outstanding wisdom with unusual mastery of language. The former appears in beliefs and legends which associate eating a lot with the attainment of unusual bravery, longevity, and physical strength. A legend about the invader Ahmad Grāñ, for example, relates that as a baby he was able to consume fourteen bowls of *ĭnjarā* at one sitting. A num-